

Remarks Welcoming Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany February 9, 1995

Chancellor Kohl, members of the German delegation, distinguished guests, on behalf of the American people, it is a distinct honor to welcome back to Washington the leader of one of our closest allies and one of the preeminent statesmen of our time, Chancellor Helmut Kohl.

Today marks another stride in our extraordinary journey together, one that has lasted nearly half a century. It began with reconstruction after one devastating war and a common effort to deter another. Today, Germany and the United States enjoy the fruits of our perseverance and our friendship. Because our nations have stood shoulder-to-shoulder for so long, last summer Chancellor Kohl and I could walk through the Brandenburg Gate together without checkpoints, without armed sentries.

Now our two nations must continue our journey together with the same resolve we have shown in the past. Today we renew and reaffirm

our vital partnership. Together we will work to support continued reform in Russia and the Newly Independent States, a cause in which Chancellor Kohl has shown such extraordinary leadership. We will consider how to move toward NATO's expansion to Europe's new democracies and how to adapt the international institutions to serve us for the next 50 years. Working together to solve the new problems we face and to create a truly integrated Europe, this is exactly how two great democracies should mark their successes and look toward the future.

Chancellor Kohl, in the spirit of friendship and gratitude and with great hope for the future, it is a personal honor on behalf of all the people of the United States to welcome you back to the White House.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:11 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House.

Exchange With Reporters Prior to Discussions With Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany February 9, 1995

1996 Presidential Campaign

Q. Mr. President, have you heard that former Vice President Quayle has decided not to run for the Republican nomination?

The President. I was literally—I was informed of that 3 minutes ago.

Q. What do you think about it?

The President. I'm a little surprised. But it's a hard decision, and it's an intensely personal one. I wish him well. I know it must have been a difficult decision for him.

Death of J. William Fulbright

Q. Do you have anything to say, sir, about Senator Fulbright?

The President. Yes. As you know, he was a very close friend of mine. And if it hadn't been for him, I don't think I'd be here today. I had a wonderful visit with him and with Mrs. Fulbright over Christmas. They came to the White House to see the decorations, and we had a

great, great visit. And I was in his home a few weeks before that. So I've kept in close touch with him in these months of his illness.

He made an amazing contribution to the life of our country and, of course, to our home State. And he was a great inspiration to thousands and thousands of us who were young when he was a Senator and serving. And the country is in his debt.

Q. Do you think you'll go to his funeral?

The President. I certainly hope so. We're—I was informed early, early this morning that he had died during the night, and I told the folks to try to work it out.

Surgeon General Nominee Foster

Q. What do you think of Dr. Foster's performance on "Nightline"?

The President. I'm sorry to say I didn't see it because I went to bed early last night; I was very tired. But I heard he did quite well.

And I think he's a good man. I think he just needs to keep talking about his life and his record and what he wants to do. I'm looking forward to the hearings.

[At this point, one group of reporters left the room, and another group entered.]

Russia

Q. Mr. President, may I ask a question? Do you see eye to eye with the Chancellor when it comes to supporting Boris Yeltsin?

The President. I think we are almost completely in agreement on our positions. Now, we haven't had a chance to talk; we've just arrived. But certainly over the last 2 years since I've

been President, our positions have been the same. And we have worked very hard to try to promote democracy and progress within Russia. And we have done it together, and I think we will continue to work together on this.

Q. Do you support economic sanctions because of the situation in Chechnya?

The President. I don't think—we just started, and we haven't had a chance to have a conversation yet. We'll have a press conference later, and we'll all answer questions then.

NOTE: The exchange began at 10:40 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

The President's News Conference With Chancellor Helmut Kohl of Germany February 9, 1995

The President. Good afternoon. Please be seated. It's a pleasure for me to welcome Chancellor Kohl to the White House again. For more than 12 years American Presidents have looked to Helmut Kohl for insight and cooperation, for friendship and support on the most pressing issues of the day. Thanks to his wisdom and leadership, the relationship between Germany and the United States has strengthened and grown, becoming a force for positive change in the post-cold-war world. America has no better friend than Chancellor Kohl.

The Chancellor's visit comes at an important time. One of the most vital issues we discussed today is building a more integrated Europe in the wake of this new era. The Chancellor and I reaffirmed our intention to press ahead with the enlargement of NATO to include Europe's new democracies. The current deliberations are moving at the right pace. We agreed that the inevitable process of NATO expansion will be gradual and open, that there will be no surprises. Its conditions, timing, and military implications must be well and widely known in advance.

We also agreed that in parallel with expansion, NATO must develop close and strong ties with Russia. Chancellor Kohl and I will consult closely on the form this new partnership will take.

We share a vision of European security that embraces a democratic Russia, and we will continue to reassure President Yeltsin that an expanded NATO will pose no threat to a democratic Russia.

Recent events in Russia were an important part of our discussions today, especially the tragedy in Chechnya. Chancellor Kohl and I are in full agreement: The violence there must end, and negotiation must begin. Every day the fighting continues, more innocent civilians fall victim. In response to international appeals, the United States will offer up to \$20 million in humanitarian and refugee assistance to alleviate their distress.

In our conversations with President Yeltsin, we have both made clear our fears about the corrosive effect the conflict in Chechnya can have on democratic, market-oriented reform in the Russian Republic. But the conflict has not changed the nature of our interests, namely that Russia's efforts to become a stable, democratic nation must succeed.

Today the Chancellor and I remain determined to stick to our course of patient, responsible support for Russian reform. But help can only be extended if Russia stays on the course and continues the hard work of building demo-